

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 5, 8, 11, and 16-20 as shown in the following listing of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of transmitting a multimedia content from a server to a client device through a distribution network upon request of said client device, said method using a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content, said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding said multimedia content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in ~~at least one set of~~ multiple sets of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each set of the slicing positions being shifted in time compared with other sets of the slicing positions, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, said method comprising:

- a step of selecting a group from said plurality of groups,
- a step of selecting a slice from said slices, and
- a step of downloading, from said server to said client device, the file that contains the selected slice and belongs to the selected group using a communication unit of the client device,

said steps being executed at least once.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a step of calculating an estimation of the current transmission rate of the distribution network, wherein said group selection step takes said estimation into account.

3. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a step of transmitting a client preference relating to said encoder characteristics from said client

device to said server, and wherein said group selection step takes said client preference into account.

4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A server having access to a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content, said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding a multimedia content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in ~~at least one set of~~ multiple sets of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each set of the slicing positions being shifted in time compared with other sets of the slicing positions, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, said server comprising:

a processor configured to select a slice from said slices,

a communication unit configured to download the file that contains the selected slice and belongs to a selected group,
wherein the communication unit is activated at least once upon reception of a request directed to said multimedia content from said client device.

6. (previously presented) A server as claimed in claim 5, wherein the communication unit is further configured to receive information relating to the current transmission rate of the distribution network from said client device, and wherein the processor is further configured to select said group on the basis of said information.

7. (previously presented) A server as claimed in claim 5, wherein the communication unit is further configured to receive client preference data, and wherein the processor is further configured to select said group on the basis of said client preference data.

8. (currently amended) A client device comprising:

a processor configured to select a group of at least one set of files from a plurality of groups, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content,

said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding a multimedia content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in ~~at least one set of~~ multiple sets of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each set of the slicing positions being shifted in time compared with other sets of the slicing positions, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, and

a communication unit connected to a server through a distribution network, wherein the communication unit is configured to send at least one request to said server, said request being directed to said multimedia content and comprising an indication of the selected group.

9. (previously presented) A client device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the processor is further configured to calculate an estimation of the current transmission rate of said distribution network and to take said estimation into account of selecting said group.

10. (previously presented) A client device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the communication unit is further configured to get a client preference, and wherein the processor is further configured to take said client preference into account of selecting said group.

11. (currently amended) A network system comprising:

a plurality of encoders with various encoder characteristics for encoding a multimedia content, thereby generating a plurality of encoded multimedia contents,

a plurality of slicers for slicing said encoded multimedia contents in ~~at least one set of~~ multiple sets of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, and for enclosing each slice of an encoded multimedia content in a file, thereby generating a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each set of the slicing positions being shifted in time compared with other sets of the slicing positions, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content,

a distribution network,

a client device connected to a server through said distribution network, wherein the client device comprises a first communication unit configured to send at least one request to said server, said request being directed to said multimedia content, and a server having access to said plurality of groups, said server comprising:

- a) a processor configured to select a slice from said slices, and
- b) a second communication unit configured to download the file that contains the selected slice and belongs to a selected group,

wherein the second communication unit is activated at least once upon reception of a request directed to said multimedia content from said client device.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting a slice comprises selecting a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein selecting the most recent slice or the closest future slice comprises:

- comparing the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices; and
- determining the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparing.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein selecting the most recent slice or the closest future slice comprises:

- comparing the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices; and
- determining the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparing.

15. (previously presented) The server of claim 5, wherein the processor is further configured to select a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.

16. (currently amended) ~~The server of claim 15, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparison.~~The method of claim 1, wherein file names of the at least one set of files are re-used on a regular basis.

17. (currently amended) ~~The server of claim 15, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparison.~~The method of claim 1, wherein each of the slices includes multiple frames.

18. (currently amended) ~~The network system of claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to select a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.~~The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of choosing the slicing positions such that each of the slices starts with a random access point, wherein the random access points are I-frames of the multimedia content such that the first frame of each of the slices is an I-frame.

19. (currently amended) ~~The network system of claim 18, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparison.~~The method of claim 1, wherein two different files correspond to the same multimedia content.

20. (currently amended) ~~The network system of claim 18, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparison.~~The method of claim 1 further comprising switching from one group associated with first

encoder characteristics to another group associated with second encoder characteristics to allow adaptation to a current transmission rate of the distribution network and/or to client preferences received from the client device.